

WADENA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING
JANUARY 6, 9:00 A.M

The Wadena County Board of Commissioners Meeting was held on Tuesday, January 6, 2009, at the Wadena County Courthouse in the Commissioners Room at 415 Jefferson St. S., Wadena Minnesota. The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Auditor/Treasurer Char West and the pledge of allegiance to the flag was said.

Present: Commissioners William Stearns, Dave Schermerhorn, Rodney Bounds, Ralph Miller, and Lane Waldahl. Also present was HR Consultant Mike Gibson.

Auditor/Treasurer West called for nominations for the 2009 Chairman of the Board of Commissioners.

Commissioner Waldahl nominated Commissioner Dave Schermerhorn. No further nominations. Ms. West called for a motion.

Motion by Stearns, seconded by Waldahl, to move that nominations cease, and cast a unanimous ballot for Commissioner Dave Schermerhorn for Chairman of the Wadena County Board of Commissioners for 2009, motion carried.

Ms. West called for nominations to serve as Vice-Chair of the Board of Commissioners.

Commissioner Bounds nominated Commissioner William Stearns.

Motion by Schermerhorn, seconded by Miller, to move that nominations cease, and cast a unanimous ballot for Commissioner William Stearns for Vice-Chairman of the Wadena County Board of Commissioners for 2009, motion carried.

Chairman Schermerhorn called for any changes in the day's agenda.

Commissioner Bounds commented he would like to see "Other" at the end of the meeting. He stated that it would be a time to ask a question or to address anything.

Commissioner Waldahl replied that would come under Commissioners Reports.

Commissioner Bounds stated that he thought Commissioners Reports were to report on classes or meetings that were attended by the Commissioners, which was done during the Meeting. He pointed out that he would prefer to see a time at the end of the meeting designated "Other".

Commissioner Stearns stated that he was not opposed to this but did not know if it was legal and stated that it should be checked out.

Commissioner Bounds stated that after looking at the minutes, there did not appear to be a time at the end of the meeting for the Board to address any concerns.

Commissioner Waldahl felt this could be done under Commissioners Reports, concerns and questions.

Commissioner Stearns recommended trying it under Commissioner Reports for this meeting and to ask Ms. West to check out the legality of adding an open agenda item, such as "Other".

Motion by Waldahl, seconded by Miller, to approve the day's agenda as presented, motion carried.

Motion by Stearns, seconded by Bounds, to approve the Board Meeting Minutes of December 11, 2008 and December 18, 2008, as distributed, motion carried.

Ms. West reminded the Board that at the previous Board Meeting the Commissioners approved the opening and reviewing of the 2009 Official Newspaper bids prior to the Board awarding the bid during the first Board Meeting on January 6, 2009. She stated that the bids were opened on January 5, 2009, at 9:00 a.m. with Commissioner Meyer, Commissioner Waldahl, County Attorney Kyra Ladd and herself in attendance. Ms. West added that bids were received from the Wadena Pioneer Journal and Review Messenger; the Pioneer Journal bid submitted was deemed defective as they did not submit the lowest classified rate paid by Commercial users as required by the Advertisement of bids and defined in MN Statute 331A.06, thus they were unable to consider the bid. She reported the Review Messenger's bid as follows;

	<u>Legal Publication</u>	<u>1st Financial</u>	<u>2nd Financial</u>	<u># of Subscribers</u>
Review Messenger	4.50 per SAU	4.50 per SAU	8.00 per SAU	3,500

Ms. West added that the Review Messenger reported that their lowest classified rate paid by Commercial users was \$9.00 and that in Statute it indicated that the bid had to be at or less than what they charge to Commercial users.

Ms. West stated that Review Messenger Editor Tim Bloomquist had previously contacted her stating that he was currently publishing legal notices at 8 Helvetica which made the font larger and easier to read. She stated that he had added that he would be submitting a bid for 6 Helvetica as well as 8 Helvetica thus providing the Commissioners with another option to choose for their legal publications. Ms. West added that the sample notices at 6 Helvetica and 8 Helvetica presented by the Review Messenger reflected the same total cost.

Motion by Bounds, seconded by Waldahl, to award the 2009 Official Newspaper bid to the Review Messenger that would include the publication of the Delinquent Tax Notice and List, the proceedings of the County Board, all other legal notices and publication of the County and the first publication of the County Financial Statement at \$4.50 per SAU, motion carried.

Commissioner Waldahl stated that the 8 Helvetica had been discussed during the bid opening and with it being the same total cost, it would be beneficial for the elderly or someone with vision problems.

Motion by Bounds, seconded by Miller, to approve the use of 8 Helvetica at \$2.70 per SAU by the Review Messenger for all Wadena County Publications, motion carried.

Tom Lecomte and Eileen Weber, St. Ann's Catholic School representatives, came to the Board to request Board consideration to donate the County's retired computers to the School.

Commissioner Waldahl stated that the County had done this in the past and if it was a help to the kids, he would make a motion to approve this donation.

Motion by Waldahl, seconded by Stearns, to donate whatever retired computers that would be available from the County to St. Ann's Catholic School;

Commissioner Bounds questioned donating versus selling for \$1.

The Board requested MIS Director Kevin Stensrude be present to answer questions as to what computers would be available and how soon they would be available, considering set up of the new ones.

Commissioner Miller questioned if this was a typical yearly turnover.

Mr. Stensrude came to the Board Meeting regarding the donation of computers. He reported that there would be approximately 8 computers available; it would be at least 30 to 45 days before they would be available for donation; this was a typical yearly turnover as the computers were being replaced ever five years.

Motion carried.

The Board reviewed information from WesMin Resource Conservation & Development regarding their 2009 dues of \$400 and the request for appointment of a Wadena County representative to their Board.

Chairman Schermerhorn stated that the program had definitely benefited the County.

Motion by Stearns, seconded by Waldahl, to approve payment of the 2009 WesMin Resource Conservation & Development annual dues in the amount of \$400;

Commissioner Miller questioned as to what the benefits had been.

Chairman Schermerhorn reported that the initial benefit was the development of the Crow Wing River Canoe Trail. He added that the Soil & Water Conservation District had also received benefits as it was basically for Farm Programs, Resource Conservation & Development, etc. Chairman Schermerhorn pointed out that there were 14 counties that participated.

Motion carried.

Ms. West provided the Board with background of the development of the Health Reimbursement Account (HRA) employee benefit. She pointed out that the County contribution was through the employee cafeteria dollars but that County dollars were transfer to the HRA at the beginning of a health insurance plan year and used by employees until their monthly cafeteria dollar contribution replenished the fund and then the County dollars were reimbursed back into each Fund that the initial advance was taken from. Ms. West added that participation had increased.

Motion by Waldahl, seconded by Stearns, to approve the Health Reimbursement Account Fund refund to the General Revenue Fund in the amount of \$32,500.00, Public Health Fund - \$3,750.00, Road & Bridge Fund - \$11,250.00, Social Services Fund - \$37,500.00 and the Solid Waste Fund \$3,750.00 retroactive to 9/30/08 for the period of 10/1/07 to 9/30/08, motion carried.

Motion by Stearns, seconded by Miller, to approve the Health Reimbursement Account Fund advance from the General Revenue Fund in the amount of \$9,750.00, Public Health Fund - \$1,750.00, Road & Bridge Fund - \$3,500.00, Social Services Fund - \$10,000.00 and the Solid Waste Fund - \$1,000.00 retroactive to 12/31/08 for the period of 10/1/08 to 12/31/08, motion carried.

Motion by Bounds, seconded by Waldahl, to approve the Health Reimbursement Account Fund advance from the General Revenue Fund in the amount of \$65,000.00, Public Health Fund - \$7,500.00, Road & Bridge Fund - \$13,750.00, Social Services Fund - \$40,000.00 and Solid Waste Fund - 2,500.00, for the period of 1/1/09 to 12/31/09.

Further questions from the Board were received and answered.

Motion carried.

Motion by Waldahl, seconded by Stearns, to approve the request for Family Medical Leave by Shaun Beck beginning November 25, 2008 for up to 12 weeks, motion carried.

Motion by Stearns, seconded by Miller, to adopt the GASB 34 "Capital Asset Policy-Self Constructed Project" retroactive to 12/31/08 and forward, as presented by the Highway Engineer, motion carried.

Mike Carr, Sheriff, came to the Board regarding his 2009 salary. He requested no change in his salary from 2008.

Motion by Waldahl, seconded by Stearns, to approve the request by the Wadena County Sheriff for his 2009 salary to remain the same as in 2008 in the amount \$77,507.50, motion carried.

Sheriff Carr reported that the Sheriff's Office had received a Federal Traffic Award for a \$2,500.00 grant for participating in the Safe & Sober Challenge and it was noted they have made valid efforts within the Wadena County Sheriff's Office to try to decrease impaired driving in Wadena County and increase the seat belt use as well.

Motion by Stearns, seconded by Bounds, to approve the following Resolution;

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING ACCEPTANCE OF A TRAFFIC SAFETY AWARD

WHEREAS, the Wadena County Sheriff's Office desired to protect the health of its citizens by improving traffic safety and participating in the Safe & Sober Challenge; and

WHEREAS, under the provision of the Highway Safety Act (P.L. 89-563), the Minnesota Department of Public Safety has federal funding to promote traffic safety; and

WHEREAS, the Minnesota Department of Public Safety had judged the Wadena County Sheriff's Office efforts to decrease impaired driving and increase seatbelt use to be exceptional, and wants to reward those efforts by providing additional funding for the department.

THEREFORE, it be resolved that the Wadena County Sheriff's Office enter into an agreement with the Minnesota Department of Public Safety, Office of Traffic Safety for the period from January 3rd, 2009 to June 30th, 2009.

The Sheriff of Wadena County is hereby authorized to execute such agreements as are necessary to implement the project on behalf of the Wadena County Sheriff's Office.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Sheriff of Wadena County is hereby authorized to be the fiscal agent and administer the grant on behalf of the Wadena County Sheriff's Office.

I certify that the above resolution was adopted by the Wadena County Board of Commissioners on January 6th, 2009.

Chairman, Board of Commissioners

Date

Wadena County Sheriff

Soledad Henriksen, County Recorder, came before the Board regarding her salary for 2009. Ms. Henriksen stated that she understood the economic problems Wadena County was facing and requested to remain at her 2008 salary for 2009.

Motion by Waldahl, seconded by Bounds, to approve the request by the Wadena County Recorder for her 2009 salary to remain the same as in 2008 in the amount \$44,090.59, motion carried.

Kyra Ladd, County Attorney, came to the Board to request the same salary received in 2008 for 2009 and would like to note that the County Attorney's proposed budget for 2009 was \$13,000 less than 2008 which also included salary increases. She added that everyone needed to be fiscally responsible.

Motion Bounds, second by Stearns, to approve the request by the Wadena County Attorney for her salary to remain the same for 2009 as in 2008 in the amount of \$83,821.62, motion carried.

Char West, Auditor/Treasurer, came to the Board stating that in light of the County's financial situation and the action of "no increase" agreed upon by the other Wadena County employees, she was requesting her 2009 salary remain the same as in 2008 which was \$59,301.63.

Motion by Stearns, seconded by Miller, to approve the 2009 salary for the Auditor/Treasurer to remain the same as in 2008 in the amount of \$59,301.63, motion carried.

The Board recessed at 10:13 a.m.

The Board reconvened at 10:19 a.m.

Deana Skov, Zoning/Parks Director, reviewed with the Board the demolition of an unoccupied home in Section 32 of Meadow Township. She reviewed the issue for the benefit of the new Commissioners on the Board; the structure was abandoned due to the infestation of bats in the attic; a permit was issued for a mobile home to be moved in with the provision that the existing dwelling would be demolished; the homeowner does not have funds to take care of the situation. Ms. Skov pointed out that the request came to the County for them to remove it and put a mechanics lien on the property for the amount of expenses incurred in demolishing the dwelling.

Ms. Skov stated that Commissioner Waldahl had suggested talking to the Highway Engineer and Sentenced to Serve (STS) to do this project. She pointed out that Mr. Urling had advised that the following costs would then be involved:

- \$95 per day for man and dump truck
- \$105 per hour for the man and loader
- \$200 per load to haul the debris to the County demolition landfill.

Ms. Skov added that Charlie Tuorila, STS Crew Leader, estimated a minimum of four days to do the work at 8 hours per day. She pointed out that the cost to do the project would be roughly \$6,400 not including the number of loads to be hauled. Ms. Skov stated that she had previously talked with the Public Health Director regarding the danger of being exposed to bat guano and was advised workers should wear masks because of the possible health hazard.

Ms. Skov stated that Rin Porter, Verndale Sun, had informed her that a local fire department may do a training to burn the building and that she did talk with the Sebeka Fire Chief who informed her that it would be a minimum of \$1,300 just to get things lined up and the residual from the burn would have to be disposed of at a lined landfill, possibly at Gwinner. She added that she felt this cost would be in excess of the \$3,450 funds in the Shoreland Grant; this cost would not include the disposal which would have to be put on a mechanics lien. Ms. Skov stated she recommended this option as it was the cheapest option way to go.

Commissioner Miller questioned if this would be the Dakota Landfill.

Ms. Skov responded that it was the County's Demolition Land Fill; that as long as it was demolished in its full form the building could be taken to the Wadena County Landfill at a cost of \$8.60 per yard; if it was burned it had to go to a lined landfill as the County could not take ash.

Commissioner Bounds questioned if it could be buried on site.

Ms. Skov responded that it could not as it was within the Shore Land District.

Commissioner Bounds questioned if they sign off so the County would not be liable.

Ms. Skov responded that the property owner was in full agreement and she could have him sign off on the project if this was the Boards wishes.

Chairman Schermerhorn questioned whether the County could require that masks be worn by those that knock down the building.

Ms. Skov responded that this definitely could be done.

Ms. Skov reported that Pickar-Corbin Excavating was chosen for the demolition as they were a local contractor who would also haul the debris to the Wadena County Landfill.

Commissioner Waldahl questioned why it would cost more using STS and the County than an outside contractor.

Ms. Skov responded that was a good question; possibly because the County does not own a back loader.

Ms. Porter questioned whether the contractor was certified to demolish hazardous waste.

Ms. Skov explained that as long as the contractor was not burying the material on site certification was not required.

Motion by Stearns, seconded by Waldahl, to hire Pickar-Corbin Excavating to demolish the unoccupied home in Section 32 of Meadow Township, in the amount of \$3,450.00, motion carried.

Motion by Stearns, seconded by Bounds, to direct the Zoning/Parks Director to place a mechanics lien on the property located in Section 32 of Meadow Township for the demolition of an unoccupied house and to include the land fill costs associated with the disposal of the debris;

Commissioner Miller questioned who would do the follow-up to make sure this gets done.

Ms. Skov responded that she would inspect the site to make sure the job was completed and correctly accomplished.

Commissioner Bounds questioned how the hole was filled.

Ms. Skov stated that they would haul clean soil in from another location to fill the hole.

Motion carried.

Karen Nelson, Public Health Director, requested of the Board to set a date and time for orientation to Public Health for the new County Commissioners. She added that it would take about one hour. The time was set following the current Board Meeting; around 1:30 p.m.

Ms. Nelson provided background regarding the Environmental Health Appeals Task Force and advised replacements for the following representations were needed:

1 County Commissioner

1 Food/Beverage or Lodging Business Owner

Ms. Nelson provided background of the Public Health Advisory Committee and advised there were two vacancies that needed to be filled for a 3-year term effective January 1, 2009 as follows:

District 2 - to replace Patti Berg

District 5 - to replace Sandi Kilbo

Commissioner Bounds questioned whether this was a paid position.

Ms. Nelson responded that it was not a paid position, just a per diem at a rate set by the County Board; last year it was \$45.00 plus mileage.

Ms. Nelson stated that a replacement was needed for one person as a 3-County Board of Health Executive Committee Member and advised that the 2008 delegates were Commissioner Schermerhorn and Commissioner Meyer; Commissioner Meyer will need to be replaced and if Commissioner Schermerhorn was willing to continue to serve, then no action was needed. She added that the Board of Health was staffed by a rotating procedure between Morrison, Todd and Wadena and that she was the Administrator for the Board of Health for 2009. Ms. Nelson pointed out that the Board must meet twice a year with three additional executive meetings.

Ms. Nelson requested a motion to recommend the Morrison-Todd-Wadena Board of Health apply for the State Health Improvement Program (SHIP) as a Board of Health application. She added that the application was due in February with funding available in the amount of \$71,436 for two years, pending effective approximately July 1, 2009.

Motion by Waldahl, seconded by Stearns, to recommend the Morrison-Todd-Wadena Board of Health apply for the State Health Improvement Program (SHIP) as a Board of Health application;

Commissioner Stearns questioned whether this was the \$30,000 that was unallotted during 2008.

Ms. Nelson responded that she did not believe this was the one.

Commissioner Miller questioned whether these programs created more job necessity.

Ms. Nelson responded that the funding and expenses for this project were not in the Public Health budget as funding was still pending; the funding always covers some overhead.

Commissioner Stearns clarified that if they do get it approved it will help their budget.

Ms. Nelson stated that this was correct, but it may require some additional staff time.

Motion carried.

Kathy Langer, Todd Wadena Community Corrections Director, presented the Board with two Resolutions and explained that she brings these Resolutions before the Board annually. She pointed out that the first one was appointment to the Executive Committee for Community Corrections and approval of the Comprehensive Plan and the second one appointment of membership to the Community Corrections Advisory Board. Ms. Langer added that she had just been before the Todd County Board of Commissioners where they appointed Commissioners Mark Blessing and David Kercher to the Executive Committee and Advisory Board.

Ms. Langer read the Resolutions.

Commissioner Schermerhorn questioned who held these positions in the past.

Ms. Langer responded Commissioners Meyer and Waldahl.

Motion by Bounds, seconded by Stearns, to approve the following Resolution and reappoint Commissioner Waldahl to the Todd Wadena Community Corrections Board and to appoint Commissioner Schermerhorn;

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, The Todd County Board of Commissioners and the Wadena County Board of Commissioners, on November 6, 2008, reviewed the 2009 Comprehensive Community Corrections Plan Updates and 2009 Budget for Todd and Wadena Community Corrections and

WHEREAS, In compliance with the regulations contained in the Community Corrections Plan, it is required that membership of the Executive Committee be confirmed by the Todd and Wadena Counties Boards of Commissioners and the Community Corrections Advisory Board for Todd and Wadena Counties.

THEREFORE, IT IS RESOLVED that the members of the Executive Committee are appointed as follows:

1. David Kercher, Todd County Commissioner.

2. Mark Blessing, Todd County Commissioner.
3. Lane Waldahl, Wadena County Commissioner.
4. Dave Schermerhorn, Wadena County Commissioner.
5. Mark Hepokoski, Chairperson of the Community Corrections Advisory Board.
6. Jane Gustafson, Vice-Chairperson of the Community Corrections Advisory Board from Todd County.
7. Honorable Sally Ireland Robertson, Todd and Wadena Counties Court Judge.

BE IT FURTHER JOINTLY RESOLVED, the Todd and Wadena Counties Boards of Commissioners vest authority in the Executive Committee, by this resolution, to implement and maintain the Comprehensive Community Corrections Plan for Todd and Wadena Counties.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF THE WADENA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS has caused this resolution to be adopted this 6th day of January, 2009.

ATTEST: WADENA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

_____ By _____
Wadena County Auditor Chairperson

Motion carried.

Ms. Langer read the second Resolution which pertained to the Advisory Board appointment.

Motion by Waldahl, seconded by Stearns, to approve the following Resolution;

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, The Todd County Board of Commissioners and the Wadena County Board of Commissioners, on May 4, 1974, and on May 5, 1974, respectively, duly caused a resolution to be adopted wherein they declared it their intention to the State of Minnesota, pursuant to Minnesota Laws of 1973, Chapter 401, to participate in the Community Corrections Act subject to the preparation and approval of a comprehensive plan by the Counties of Todd and Wadena and the Commissioner of Corrections for the State of Minnesota and

THEREFORE, IT IS RESOLVED pursuant to the revision of said law, that the following persons are hereby appointed by the Chairperson of each County Board of Commissioners, with the advice and consent of each, to the Community Corrections Advisory Board.

1. Serving in the capacity of Citizen Member shall be Mark Hepokoski.

2. Serving in the capacity of Citizen Member shall be Naomi Moyer.
3. Serving in the capacity of Ethnic Minorities shall be Judy Denny.
4. Serving in the capacity of Victim Services shall be Connie Nelson.
5. Serving in the capacity of Todd County Commissioner shall be Mark Blessing
6. Serving in the capacity of Todd County Commissioner shall be David Kercher
7. Serving in the capacity of Wadena County Commissioner shall be Dave Schermerhorn
8. Serving in the capacity of Wadena County Commissioner shall be Lane Waldahl
9. Serving in the capacity of District Court Judge shall be Honorable Sally Ireland Robertson.
10. Serving in the capacity of Prosecuting Attorney shall be Jane Gustafson.
11. Serving in the capacity of Public Defender shall be Gregory Peters.
12. Serving in the capacity of Police Chief shall be Kyle Huber.
13. Serving in the capacity of Wadena County Sheriff shall be Michael Carr, Jr.
14. Serving in the capacity of Todd County Sheriff shall be Peter Mikkelson.
15. Serving in the capacity of Health Professional shall be Cheryl Schneider.
16. Serving in the capacity of Social Services Director shall be Frank Sandelin.
17. Serving in the capacity of Educational Administrator shall be James Hofer.
18. Serving in the capacity of Corrections Agent shall be Sarah Urbach.
19. Serving in the capacity of Correctional Administrator shall be Katherine Langer.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF THE WADENA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS have caused this resolution to be adopted this 6th day of January, 2009.

ATTEST:

WADENA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Wadena County Auditor

By _____
Chairperson

Motion carried.

Mike Gibson, HR Consultant, provided the Board with an update on negotiations. He stated that a tentative agreement has been reached with the Local #320; the Business Agent had provided him with a breakdown to review; there were some changes in the language to clarify a number of areas in the contracts; it was a one-year agreement and that all salaries and benefits had been

frozen in place. Mr. Gibson added that he met with the Highway Department 49'ers union and there was a request to meet again on January 13, 2009.

Commissioner Waldahl stated that he would like to thank the Local #320 Business Agent for the work she had done in negotiating these Contract, along with the employees.

Joanne Derby, Local #320 Business Agent, pointed out that the tentative Agreement had not gone to the union for a vote.

Commissioner Bounds stated that the two new Commissioners would like to see copies of the contract before and after the changes.

Mr. Gibson addressed the issue of the Human Resources Coordinator position commenting he had been asked to take this part-time Consultant position to look at Wadena County. He passed out a handout outlining the Contract assignments; Research whether Wadena County had a need for a Human Resources position, County Coordinator position, a combination of the two positions, or no change; Consult with Department Heads and/or County Board on hiring, conflict resolution, disciplinary action; Review current County Health Insurance Policy, County Personnel Policy and other County Policy and procedures affecting personnel and recommend any changes or updates as needed; Assist in 2008 County Union and Non-Union wage and benefit negotiations; Seek out economic improvements to the operation of Wadena County; Assist Wadena County Board at "working meetings" with architectural and engineering firms to develop an action plan to implement a "Master Plan" over an acceptable time frame.

Mr. Gibson reported that out of the 87 counties in Minnesota, 81 had an Administrator, Coordinator, or a Coordinator/ Human Resources person. He added that in our situation the size of the staff and budget had changed as well as responsibilities that had been passed down from the State and Federal. Mr. Gibson stated that what other counties had found was that the responsibilities had increased to a point where the elected Auditor/Treasurer position had to do more than originally the Auditor/Treasurer was intended to do; there were enough distractions in their day that it was difficult to get their normal work completed.

Mr. Gibson stated that currently you are actually dealing with a corporation with a 20 million budget. He pointed to a chart on the wall illustrating that there were 5 Commissioners and 15 Departments; with the appointments of a Liaison to each of the Departments. Mr. Gibson stated that the problem, in his mind, was that the Commissioner becomes familiar with the functions of the three Departments he would be involved with as Liaison; but did he know what would be going on in all the other Departments.

Mr. Gibson added that some people felt the Department Heads should be able to take care of their own Department. He pointed out that when you hire a person one of the first things you inquire about was what kind of background and experience do they have in the field they were being considered for; if someone was trained in some of these professions, frequently they are not trained in how to deal with personnel. He pointed out that a good supervisor knows when to ask for help; he had found that Department Heads were on the right track, when dealing with

personnel, but they just needed some reassurance of this.

Mr. Gibson reviewed several examples; past practice had been that if it snowed on a holiday and the snowplows needed to go out, his interpretation of the union contract states that an employee would be paid 2 times their hourly rate, but for years these employees have been paid 3 ½ times their hourly rate; due to inclement weather the County Buildings were closed, a misunderstanding by some Department Heads, with the best of intentions, told staff they would pay them time and half if they would stay to get the work done, when in fact the Personnel Policy did not authorize this.

Mr. Gibson pointed out that the Board sets budgets and policy. He added that, from his experience, there needed to be someone who could have a global view; there needed to be someone who was not attached to one section, but was attached to the operation as a whole. Mr. Gibson pointed out that one of the things not done was Board evaluations of Department Heads; he feels Department Heads want to have this done as well as the people the Commissioners represent. He stated that the Board, some years earlier, had established a Department Head Committee to assist the Board in developing ideas; this group was meeting on a quarterly basis but due to the amount of things going on in County business, he recommended they meet monthly, which was now being done.

Mr. Gibson related some of the accomplishments made over the previous year;

- Master Plan has been discussed due to the need for more space of the County because of the increase in the number of people incarcerated in the Jail and the seriousness of the charges and risks it presents.
- The County spent \$68,000 for contracted attorney fees last year in dealing with employee issues and negotiations which was reduced to \$5,000 in 2008. Mr. Gibson added that he had resolved to save the County at least the same amount he was being paid for the position.
- In getting ready for negotiations it was thought that the County would have to do the one-step increases; he had advised he knew the one-step increase did not have to be implemented and had it been done it would have cost the County \$250,000.
- Budget process used to be discussing the budget with each Department Head. This year we met out of the Courthouse with all Department Heads present and discussed the budgets which gave a much broader perspective of the overall picture.
- The Board had given directive to Department Heads not to contact the Business Agent or an attorney in determining the meaning of contract language as this would be how something could be misinterpreted.
- An Assessor had been hired at a wage that would be increased in 6 months; the Business Agent advised this could not be done. It was resolved through communication and avoided major problems. Having someone in the Building to help deter problems before they occur would be invaluable.

Mr. Gibson pointed out to the Board this position was not about him but about the position. He added that he felt it was a disservice to the citizens represented not having someone with a global view in the County; the public needed to be educated on the issue.

Mr. Gibson stated that his current contract runs out a little over one month and that the final task was up to the Board to decide where they would go from here. He added that his suggestion to the Board was that they needed to strongly consider this position.

Commissioner Miller questioned Mr. Gibson whether he was on duty at the time the situation occurred in the Assessor's Office.

Mr. Gibson responded that he was not as the situation occurred in October 2007 and he started in March 2008 with it coming to a head in May 2008.

Chairman Schermerhorn recommended that Mr. Gibson continue his report to the Board when he had completed his Contract, which would provide time to write down questions and possibly hold a meeting just for the purpose of asking questions regarding the subject.

Mr. Gibson suggested that if the Board had questions to write them down and give them to him ahead of time so he could be more articulate in his answers. He also stated that if the Board would like him to go into their districts to meet with the people so they could ask him questions directly, he would be willing to do this. Mr. Gibson added that there were great things going on in Wadena County at very difficult times with good people to work with.

Chairman Schermerhorn recommended consideration of Mr. Gibson holding a public meeting at the north end of the County and at the south end of the County, for this purpose.

Commissioner Bounds responded that he would want to be comfortable with the position prior to approaching his constituents.

Mr. Gibson suggested that the information be presented to the constituents so that they could provide the Commissioners with feedback on the position.

Commissioner Waldahl stated that he was in agreement with the Chair's recommendation to hold another meeting so people could ask questions.

Commissioner Stearns commented that when the Board approved this Contract, personally he did not know whether the County needed a County Administrator, County Coordinator, Human Resource person or another entity stated that we needed a County Economic Developer. He pointed out that a larger county would have all four and some not much larger than Wadena County have all four. Commissioner Stearns stated that the one thing he had seen was that the human resource role had been invaluable and the Department Heads with larger departments have maybe used the position more than the smaller ones and it will be needed in the future. He added that the County did not need all four entities, but we do need a component of one, Human Resource; Department Heads are on-the-line all the time; you say the wrong thing - it was a constant training and teaching.

Wayne Wolden, Wadena Mayor, requested of the Board that there be at least one meeting during the evening for those who work during the day.

Orville Meyer, former Commissioner, commented from the audience, in looking back over 2008 the number of grievances had reduced, which speaks for itself.

Chairman Schermerhorn recommended that another meeting be held with Mr. Gibson and if the Board wanted Mr. Gibson to meet with their constituents, meetings could be set up.

Commissioner Miller stated this time frame that Commissioner Bounds had mentioned was going to be an advantage for the opportunity to bring some of the things out. He stated that he had been finding out by being around some of the different Departments and interpreting things differently than a lot of people have, he had a sensed of a lack of communication. Commissioner Miller added that there were about three steps to this; 1) communication, 2) absolute honesty, and 3) absolute accountability; if those three things were accomplished by everyone, it would help.

Joel Ulring, Highway Engineer, came to the Board to report that the work at the Wadena Depot had been completed and the final amount of the project contract with Gopher State Contractors was \$368,818.68. He pointed out that the original contract amount was \$347,633.00 with \$21,185.68 of additional work done. Mr. Ulring requested a Board motion to approve the "Certificate of Performance" for the project.

Motion by Waldahl, seconded by Bounds, to approve the Certificate of Performance" following the completion of the Wadena Depot Project;

Commissioner Bounds questioned what the cost and reimbursement for time by the Highway Department was.

Mr. Ulring responded that with these types of projects the work was in-kind.

Commissioner Bounds questioned why they wouldn't want reimbursement.

Mr. Ulring responded that the Federal Funds go for construction and not engineering. He added that the County made this commitment with the engineering time being absorbed by the Department.

Commissioner Bounds stated that he did not think the County should be holding the bag for engineering labor and time.

Commissioner Stearns commented that when talking about engineering time, we are talking about supervisory administrator, not drawings, not any engineering work done by the County Engineer. He pointed out that one thing required was on-site supervision and that the Board had decided this would not be provided by the County so someone was hired to do on-site inspection, which was paid for by Grant money, not construction money.

Motion carried.

Mr. Uring requested the following unreserved/dedicated fund accounts be established for an indefinite period of time. He further requested the \$25,000 of unexpended funds in the Building Improvement line item be put into the Building Capital Improvements funds as the Highway Department was scheduled to replace the balance of the Wadena facility doors and windows by early summer of 2009.

Motion by Stearns, seconded by Waldahl, to set up an account of unreserved/dedicated funds as requested by the Highway Engineer as follows:

<u>Account Name</u>	<u>Account Number</u>
Equipment Capital Investments	13-000-000-0000-2813
Building Capital Improvements	13-000-000-0000-2807
County Road Capital Improvements	13-000-000-0000-2808

and to put the \$25,000 unexpended funds into the Building Capital Improvements unreserved/dedicated account for the purpose of replacing the balance of the Wadena facility doors and windows in early summer of 2009, motion carried.

Commissioner Bounds requested a coversheet for the next meeting of the Policy used when plowing and sanding was to be done.

Commissioner Miller commented that he was aware that Mr. Uring had received a phone call that he had directed to his home; he questioned whether it was appropriate to give his home phone number.

Mr. Uring responded that he did not necessarily like to be called at home if there was a Policy that covered the situation, however, but does not want to be unreachable and was a public servant.

Ms. Porter questioned if the new Commissioners receive a copy of all Policies.

Mr. Uring responded there was a 3-ring binder of the 5-year Capital Improvement Plan in it which should have been turned over from the retiring Commissioners.

Sean Uselman, Building Services Director, and Scott Carpenter, Solid Waste Director, came to the Board regarding the discussion during the previous Board Meeting on the purchase of a new skidsteer by the Maintenance Department and transferring their old machine to the Solid Waste Department.

Mr. Uselman stated that there was a recommendation by the Solid Waste Review Committee to accept the low bid from Evergreen Equipment with the trade-in of Solid Waste's unusable bobcat. Bids received were as follows;

Aldrich Tractor – Gehl 5240	\$24,013.00	w/Trade = \$23,013.00
State Contract -Bobcat 185	\$23,324.00	Will not accept trade
Evergreen Equipment-Bobcat 185	\$27,400.00	w/Trade \$22,500.00

Mr. Carpenter stated that after talking to Mr. Gibson, he did some independent research for just Solid Waste. He stated that Solid Waste was currently renting a bobcat as the bobcat owned by the Department was not in working order. He contacted both Aldrich Tractor and Evergreen Equipment and received a quote for two different machines for both Gehl and Bobcat; one was for a large machine and one for a machine that suited Solid Waste's need. Mr. Carpenter distributed handouts and stated that only the big machine was readily available. He added that Commissioner Miller had mentioned the comparison in controls and as he was not familiar with a Gehl he test drove one. Mr. Carpenter pointed out that his concern was safety as the operation of the machine was indoors and the Gehl was foreign to him and his employee; both were awesome machines and both could do the job.

Mr. Carpenter compared the cost of the smaller machines;

Evergreen Equipment	\$18,500 with trade-in
Aldrich Tractor	\$22,100 Gehl with trade-in

Mr. Gibson added that he had discussed with Commissioner Miller the day before that the Maintenance Department would like to have a 2 speed machine instead of their current 1 speed machine to shorten travel time between County buildings and the Solid Waste Department needs a bobcat. He stated that Mr. Uselman was gone that day so recommended that Mr. Carpenter further research Solid Waste's need for a skidsteer. Mr. Gibson stated that he had further recommended that Mr. Carpenter try to negotiate with Evergreen Equipment the current rent expense of approximately \$850 into the purchase price.

Mr. Uselman pointed out the Maintenance Department's need for a 2 speed bobcat. He stated that the Department had loaded snow for five hours the day before, which was a waste of County time, and any way to speed the process up would be an improvement.

Mr. Gibson pointed out that delayed time in purchasing a new machine could result in an increase in rental time of the bobcat Solid Waste was currently paying to Evergreen Equipment.

The Board reviewed quotes from Mr. Carpenter.

Commissioner Miller stated that he was not personally in favor of a two-speed as it was a high maintenance item; but would be in favor of a larger bucket.

Commissioner Stearns stated that he understood that the 2 speed would only be used between buildings but the bigger bucket size could not be used on the sidewalks.

Commissioner Waldahl stated that he felt it was important to save wherever they could; being comfortable with the equipment and safety was important.

Commissioner Stearns commented we have an opportune time to make a good 3-way trade, if we decide to do that, with an approximate increase in cost of \$4,000.

Commissioner Bounds questioned whether the Highway Department could use their big loader to break up the snow.

Mr. Uselman responded that it would take the Highway Department one day to unload their trucks and remove their sanders.

Motion by Bounds, seconded by Miller, to accept the bid from Evergreen Equipment, Inc. for the purchase, by the Solid Waste Department, of a Bobcat S175 skid loader w/cab in the amount of \$30,459 less trade in of \$11,959 for a total cost of \$18,500, including forgiving the rent charge to date, motion carried.

Mr. Carpenter informed the Board that the Solid Waste Committee had discussed the need to retro fit the recycling bins to a hook system and reviewed a quote from Pro-Tainer, Inc. to add a hook and A-Frame to the five recycling roll offs and paint the front sheet. He stated that Pro-Tainer would charge \$350 per box which could be done locally if Solid Waste purchased the parts for \$150 per box. Mr. Carpenter pointed out his concern that if there was a problem with the new system there would be no product liability coverage if the parts were purchased and then installed.

Motion by Waldahl, second by Stearns, to accept the quote from Pro-Tainer, Inc. to add a hook and A-Frame to the five Solid Waste recycling roll off bins and paint the front sheet, motion carried.

The Board recessed at 1:05 p.m.

The Board reconvened at 1:10 p.m.

Commissioners Reports:

Commissioner Waldahl: No report

Commissioner Stearns: Star Lake Advisory Board

Commissioner Schermerhorn: No report

Commissioner Bounds recommended the Board hold a working meeting to set goals; to look at one or two goals that the Board could reach together.

Commissioner Miller stated he did not mean to criticize the previous Board but sensed a lack of communication between the Board and Department Heads, which necessitated Mr. Gibson's position. He added that the Board should not be a stranger to Liaison responsibility.

Commissioner Stearns pointed out that the relationship between the Board and the Department Heads was an important relationship; it was not a regular boss/employee relationship; the Board was not there to micromanage.

Chairman Schermerhorn made the following 2009 Department Health Liaisons appointments;
Commissioner Bounds – Public Health, Building Maintenance and Zoning/Parks
Commissioner Miller – Assessor, Data Processing, Extension
Commissioner Schermerhorn – Sheriff, Recorder, Auditor/Treasurer
Commissioner Waldahl – County Attorney, Court Administration, Veterans Services
Commissioner Stearns – Highway, Solid Waste

Chairman Schermerhorn made the following 2009 Board Committee Appointments:

COMMISSIONER RODNEY BOUNDS

Fair Board – Ag Society
Ottertail Community Action
Zoning and Planning Commission
WesMin - Alternate
Mental Health Hosp. Community Advisory Board 11-27-07
Health Advisory Committee
G.I.S. & MISAC
Council on Aging
Collaborative - Health
Perham Recovery Resource Facility - Alternate
Compliance Fund Committee 1-18-07
Negotiation

COMMISSIONER RALPH MILLER

Old Wadena Committee
Extension
Fair Board – Wadena County Ag Society
Wadena County Parks Board
WesMin - Primary
Ottertail Community Action Council
Law Library
MISAC – GIS
Building Services Committee 6-22-07
Continuity Planning Committee 10-18-07

COMMISSIONER DAVE SCHERMERHORN

South Country Health Alliance – Alternate
Todd County Corrections Board
Kitchigami Regional Library Board
Region 5 Commission
Wadena County Parks Board 2-7-07
Continuity Planning Committee 10-18-07
Personnel
West Central Chemical Dependency Treatment & Correctional Center – Alternate
Co 800 Meg Radio Board – Alternate

Building Services 6-22-07
Extension
Public Health Advisory
Central MN EMS Council - Alternative
Department Head Committee
Environmental Health Task Force
Todd-Wadena Community Corrections

COMMISSIONER LANE WALDAHL

Environmental Health Board Task Force
Personnel
Law Library
Todd Wadena Corrections Board, Advisory Board
and other related Committees
Bell Hill Recovery Center
West Central Chemical Dependency Treatment & Correctional Center – Primary
Collaborative: Community Corrections
Central MN EMS Council - Primary
Health Insurance Advisory Committee
Compliance Fund Committee 1-18-07
Joint Public Health & EMS Preparedness
800 MHz Radio Board
AMC – Public Safety

COMMISSIONER WILLIAM STEARNS

Soil & Water Conservation District
Water Plan
Hazardous Waste & Solid Waste – Chairperson for both
AMC Transportation, Legislative Steering Committee
Perham Resource & Recovery Center
South Country Health Alliance – Primary
Region 5 NCEDA Full Corp Board
Document Management Committee 7-3-07
Negotiation Committee (appointed @1-8-08 Bd Mtg)
Star Lakes Advisory Committee
Department Head Committee

ALL COMMISSIONERS

Internal Governmental Affairs
Budget – All Executive Committee
Tax Forfeiture Land
Legislative
Board of Health
Board of Equalization
Overall Economic Development
Association of MN Counties & Committees
Special Needs Master Planning Committee

Multi County Joint Powers Board of Corrections
Co Building and Spacial Needs Committee

Ms. West reviewed with the Board a letter received from the Minnesota Department of Revenue informing the County of the State Unallotment of \$133,049 of the \$445,410 2008 County Program Aid (CPA) that was received on December 26, 2008. She pointed out this unallotment affected the General Revenue Fund, Road & Bridge Fund and Social Service Fund as the allocation of CPA was based on the percentage of CPA listed by fund in the 2008 Tax Levy. She reviewed the breakdown of unallocated CPA dollars by fund, as follows:

General Revenue	- \$59,004.46
Road & Bridge	- \$32,111.36
Social Services	- <u>\$41,933.18</u>
Total	\$133,049.00

Board consensus was to inform Department Heads during the January 7, 2009 Department Head Meeting so they could provide the Board with recommendations as to how to deal with the cuts in funding.

Motion by Stearns, seconded by Waldahl, to approve the Health Reimbursement Account refund to the General Revenue Fund in the amount of \$9,750.00, Public Health Fund - \$1,750.00, Road & Bridge Fund - \$3,500.00, Social Services Fund - \$10,000.00 and the Solid Waste Fund - \$1,000.00 retroactive to 12/31/08 for the period of 10/1/08 to 12/31/08, motion carried.

Commissioner Bounds related from past experience that it was helpful for one person from the Board to review the bills prior to a Board Meeting once a month on a rotation basis. He added that this might be something to consider in the future.

Motion by Stearns, seconded by Miller, to approve payment of the Board of Commissioner Bills for 12/31/08 in the amount of \$69,226.66 and for 1/6/09 in the amount of \$34,039.18 for a total of \$103,265.84, motion carried.

Commissioner Bounds questioned when the Board could meet to have a Planning Session.

Commissioner Stearns recommended Ms. West include, on the January 22, 2009 Board Agenda, a Planning Session Meeting time from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Chairman Schermerhorn recessed the Regular Board of Commissioners meeting at 2:10 p.m for the purpose of holding a Closed Meeting to discuss Negotiations and a Personnel issue.

Chairman Schermerhorn reconvened the Regular Board of Commissioners Meeting at 3:35 p.m.

Chairman Schermerhorn stated that before the Board was consideration of a motion pertaining to the Seasonal Parks Maintenance position.

Mr. Gibson pointed out that the issue was whether to discontinue the current permanent, full-time, Seasonal Parks Maintenance position and then call for RFP's for a Park Maintenance Contract.

Motion by Waldahl, seconded by Stearns, to discontinue the Permanent Full-Time Seasonal Parks Maintenance position as of January 6, 2009,

Commissioner Miller requested clarification as to whether this position was being eliminated.

Commissioner Stearns responded that this County employee position was being eliminated; the work would be done through a contract.

Motion carried.

Motion by Bounds, seconded by Miller, to adjourn the Board of Commissioners Meeting at 3:40 p.m., motion carried.

Charleen West, Auditor/Treasurer

David Schermerhorn, Chairman